

a note that Mexico can use to borrow money on its own account. And because the guarantees are clearly not entirely risk-free to the United States, Mexico will make an advanced payment to us, like an insurance premium. No guarantees will be issued until we are satisfied that Mexico can provide the assured means of repayment. As soon as the situation in Mexico is fully stabilized, we expect Mexico to start borrowing once again from the private markets without United States Government guarantees.

The U.S. has extended loans and loan guarantees many, many times before to many different countries. In fact, we've had a loan mechanism in place with Mexico since 1941. And Mexico has always made good on its obligations.

Now, there will be tough conditions here to make sure that any private money loaned to Mexico on the basis of our guarantees is well and wisely used. Our aim in imposing the conditions, I want to make clear, is not to micromanage Mexico's economy or to infringe in any way on Mexico's sovereignty but simply to act responsibly and effectively so that we can help to get Mexico's economic house back in order.

I know some say we should not get involved. They say America has enough trouble at home to worry about what's going on somewhere else. There are others who may want to get involved in too much detail to go beyond what the present situation demands or what is appropriate. But we must see this for what it is. This is not simply a financial problem for Mexico; this is an American challenge.

Mexico is our third largest trading partner already. The livelihoods of thousands and thousands of our workers depend upon continued strong export growth to Mexico. That's why we must reach out and not retreat.

With the bipartisan leadership of Congress, I am asking the new Congress to cast a vote, therefore, for the loan guarantee program as a vote for America's workers and America's future. It is vital to our interests. It is vital to our ability to shape the kind of world that I think we all know we have to have.

No path to the future—let me say again—in a time when many decisions are beyond the immediate control of any national government, much less that of a developing nation, no path to the future can be free of difficulty. Not every stone in a long road can be seen from the first step. But if we are on the right path, then we must do this. Our interests demand it. Our values support it, and it is good for our future.

Let me say again that the coalition of forces supporting this measure is significant; it may be historic. The new Republican leaders in Congress, the leadership of the Democratic Party in Congress, the Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, why are they doing this? And I might say, I was immediately impressed by how quickly every person I called about this said, "Clearly, we have to act." They instinctively knew the stakes.

Now in the public debate questions should be properly asked and properly answered. But let us not forget what the issue is, let us not read too little into this moment, or try to load it up with too many conditions unrelated to the moment. The time is now to act. It is in our interest. It is imperative to our future. I hope all of you will do what you can to take that message to the Congress and to the American people.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:49 p.m. in the Cash Room at the Treasury Department.

## Remarks on Retirement Protection Legislation

January 19, 1995

Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary. After that kind introduction I'm loathe to say what I was about to say, which is I'm afraid the headline on this story will be "Reich comes out for playing hard." [Laughter] But I think people who work hard should also be able to play hard. [Laughter]

I want to thank Paul Wood for his story, and Marvin Clarke for his testimony in his long battle to make sure the country did something to help people so that there wouldn't be other people in the situation he finds himself in. I want to thank the steelworkers and the senior citizens groups and

all the others who were mentioned by Secretary Reich. I'd like to especially thank someone who is not here, my longtime friend, J.J. Pickle, who retired from the Congress and who left this as his last legacy in a long career of helping people with their own lives. I'd like to thank another longtime friend of mine who is still here—that's maybe a disability in this town, but Marty Slate has done a wonderful job at the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation. I'll never forget the first time Hillary told me about Marty Slate. She said, "That's the smartest guy I ever met in my life. He'll find a way to solve any kind of problem." And you have done a fine job, and we're grateful to you.

And I'd like to thank someone whose name I don't know, and I've been trying to find out before this moment. I'd like to thank the person in the Richmond debate in 1992 who asked President Bush and Ross Perot and Bill Clinton about the problems of underfunded pensions, and first got my attention on this issue. I wish—I don't know who that person was, but I am deeply indebted, and now so are several million other Americans, to that person for bringing this issue personally to me in a very direct way.

Two years ago from tomorrow, I became President, with a commitment to try to restore the American dream for all Americans and to make sure that we enter the next century as the strongest country in the world, a force for peace and freedom and democracy, but most important of all, as one which in a very different world would keep the American dream alive for all of our people.

When I signed the Retirement Protection Act into law last month, it was almost completely unnoticed because at the end of the year it had to go through in the comprehensive legislation that involved the passage of the GATT trade agreement. And we wanted to do this today because this act was so profoundly important to so many millions of Americans. And it says a lot about what we are trying to do here in Washington.

This is part of a new economic policy designed to help the American people stay ahead in a world economy that is changing so rapidly that, while it offers vast new benefits to people, it also is very frightening to a lot of people and causes too much insecurity

and unsettling for people who have worked hard and done the right things all their lives. It gives the American taxpayers a more effective, more efficient, and more disciplined government. And this bill furthers what I have called my own contract with America, the new covenant. It says that people who act responsibly should be rewarded.

The Retirement Protection Act says that people deserve a pension system that they rely on. They deserve employers who take actions to be worthy of their own trust and the labor that they give them, year-in and year-out. They deserve a Government that will protect them and stand by them, a Government that is their partner.

It says to employers that they can no longer gamble with the retirement savings of their own employees, allowing pension plans to become dangerously underfunded, expecting taxpayers to bail them out. It means that responsible businesses with well-funded plans will no longer have to carry an unfair share of the burden of the insurance costs for businesses who do not do the same.

As a result of the new law, the funding level of large, underfunded pension plans will be increased dramatically so that the benefits can be paid as they were promised. The National Pension Insurance System will remain secure. Employees will get better information warning them when their plans could be at risk.

In stabilizing the Federal insurance system, we used the power of Government to avert a potential crisis, protecting millions of retirees, corporate pension plans, and the taxpayers from huge potential losses.

Today we can be grateful that the security of our pensions are strong and growing stronger, thanks to the Retirement Protection Act and the work of all of you in this room who did so much to make it happen.

Thank you very, very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:34 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Marvin D. Clarke of Moundsville, WV, who lost one-third of his pension, and Paul E. Wood of Griffin, GA, who feared losing his pension. The retirement benefits legislation appears in Title 7 of the Uruguay Round Agreements Act of 1994 (P.L. 103-465).

**Message to the Congress  
Transmitting the Estonia-United  
States Fishery Agreement**

*January 19, 1995*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

In accordance with the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 1801 *et. seq.*), I transmit herewith the Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Estonia Extending the Agreement of June 1, 1992, Concerning Fisheries Off the Coast of the United States. The Agreement, which was effected by an exchange of notes at Tallinn on March 11 and May 12, 1994, extends the 1992 Agreement to June 30, 1996.

In light of the importance of our fisheries relationship with the Republic of Estonia, I urge that the Congress give favorable consideration to this Agreement at an early date.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
January 19, 1995.

**Letter to Congressional Leaders  
Transmitting a Plan for  
Consolidation of International  
Broadcasting**

*January 19, 1995*

*Dear Mr. Chairman:*

Pursuant to the requirements of section 310(a)(2)(B) of the United States International Broadcasting Act of 1994 (title III, Public Law 103-236), I am pleased to transmit a Plan for the Consolidation of United States Government International Broadcasting.

The Plan reflects my continued strong commitment to the use of international radio and television as methods for advancing democracy and enlarging the community of free-market nations.

I look forward to working with the Congress on this and other issues in the months ahead.

Sincerely,

**William J. Clinton**

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Mark O. Hatfield, chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, House Committee on International Relations; and Bob Livingston, chairman, House Committee on Appropriations.

**Exchange With Reporters After  
Taping the President's Radio  
Address**

*January 20, 1995*

**Loan Guarantees and Domestic Politics**

**Q.** Mr. President, what do you say to Congressman Leach, who suggests that the partisanship, the bickering over Speaker Gingrich's book deal is poisoning the atmosphere and not allowing this Mexican package to go through?

**The President.** Well, of course, he has been in Washington many more years than I have, but in the 2 years that I have been here, I have seen an unusual amount of partisan bickering. But it didn't stop us from passing GATT, from dealing with NAFTA, from dealing with the urgent problems in Russia that we confronted when I came here early on, and from pursuing a course in the Middle East that is having a very positive result, from doing any number of other things that were critical to the national interest. And it can't stop us now.

We have to do what we always do in these cases. We have to act, act quickly, act with dispatch, and put the national interest first. That's what we all have to do.

NOTE: The exchange began at 11:44 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

**Message on the Observance of  
National African American History  
Month, February 1995**

*January 20, 1995*

Warm greetings to everyone celebrating African American History Month, 1995.

Hillary and I join you in marking the brave efforts of the countless Americans throughout our nation's history who have demanded